



2019

# NW Parking District Parking Assessment and Permit Analysis *Executive Summary*

Prepared for:

City of Portland Bureau of Transportation  
1221 SW 4th Ave., Portland, OR 97204

Prepared by:

**RICK WILLIAMS CONSULTING**  
Parking & Transportation

Rick Williams, *Principal*  
Owen Ronchelli, *Project Manager*  
J. Connor Williams, *Data Specialist*

**RBT**  
CONSULTANTS

William Reynolds, *Principal*

 **PARACHUTE  
STRATEGIES**

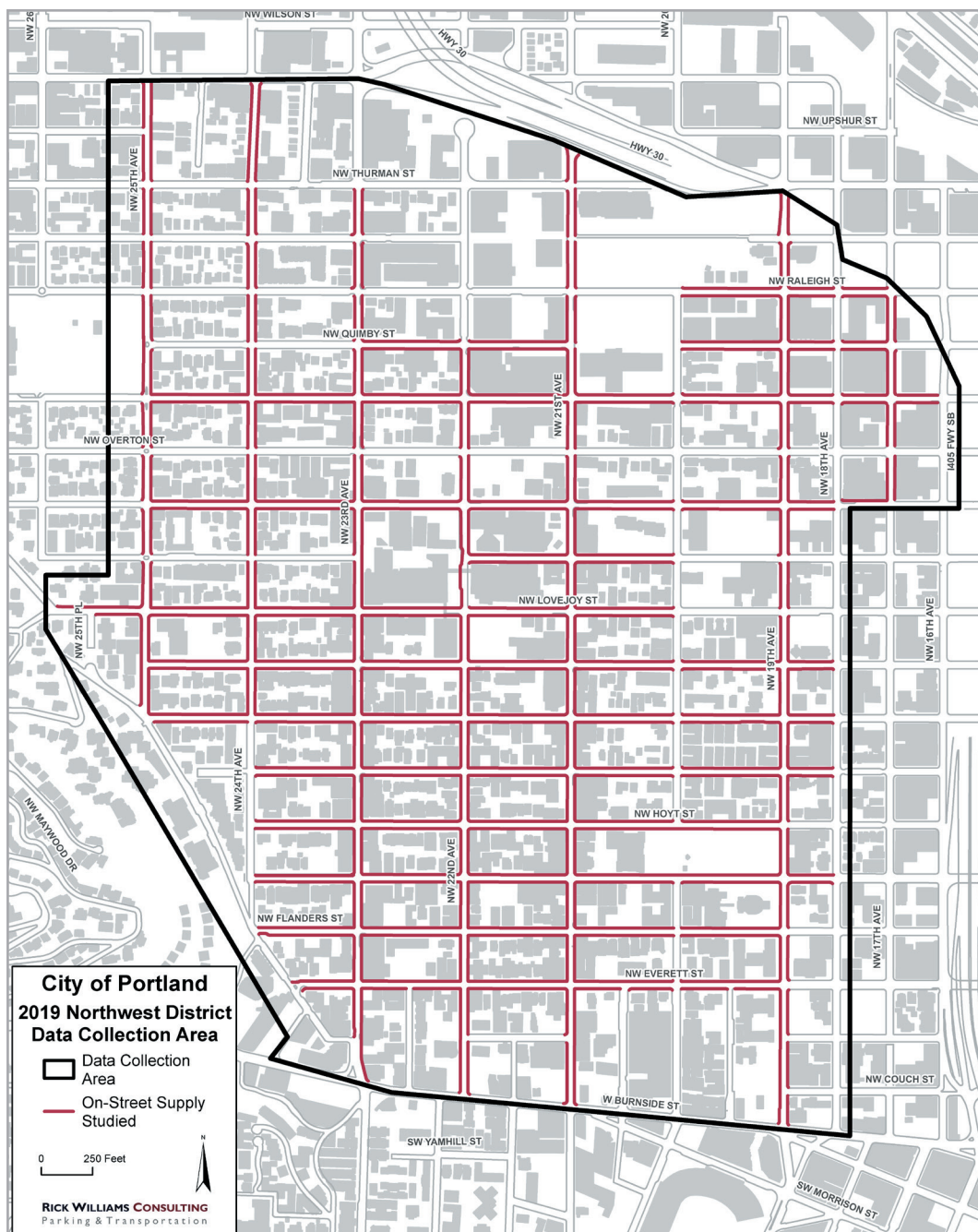
Guenevere Millius, *Principal*  
Julia Sylla, *Graphic Designer*  
Aubrey Gates King, *Copy Editor*

## Introduction

This document summarizes data collected by observing on-street parking spaces within the NW Parking Plan District over two Tuesdays in October, 2019 between the hours of 7:00 AM and 9:00 PM. Data collected included overall utilization of parking stalls by hour, length of stay by stall type, use and non-use of permits, and instances of parking violations. Data from this study is compared to observations from data collected over two Tuesdays in October 2018.

The study cataloged hourly license plate data for 3,644 parking stalls over a 14-hour period of each day of the study as well as all permit use (by type of permit) over the same period.

A more detailed look at the study findings can be found in the full NW Parking District Parking Assessment and Permit Analysis report.





## Inventory of Parking Stalls in NW Portland

The table below lays out the different types of on-street parking spaces (or stalls) that are available in NW Portland. They are differentiated from each other based on how they are managed. Tools that are used to manage parking in NW Portland include:



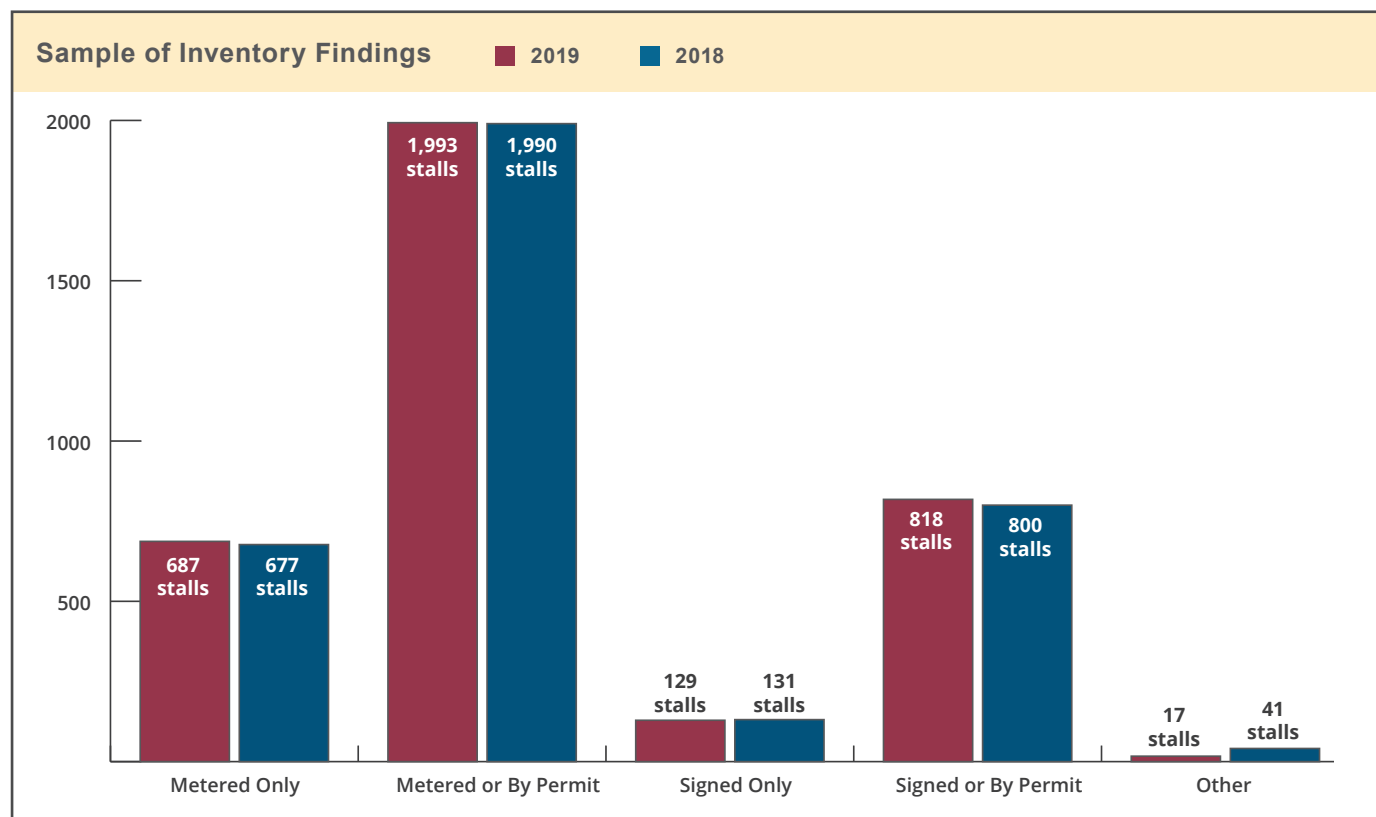
**Parking Meters:** In NW Portland, there are metered spaces which people can use for up to one hour, two hours, four hours, and five hours, depending on how they are designated.



**Signed:** Some spaces are governed by signs indicating if, when, and for how long stalls may be used. Some signed spaces offer fixed time stays for all motorists, while others provide either a fixed time stay or an “or by permit” option, which allows are permit holders to park indefinitely.



**Area Parking Permits:** NW residents and employees pay an annual fee to obtain permits that allow them to park in designated spaces at any time. Motorists without permits may also use these spaces but must comply with a fixed time limit and pay for parking at a meter where required.

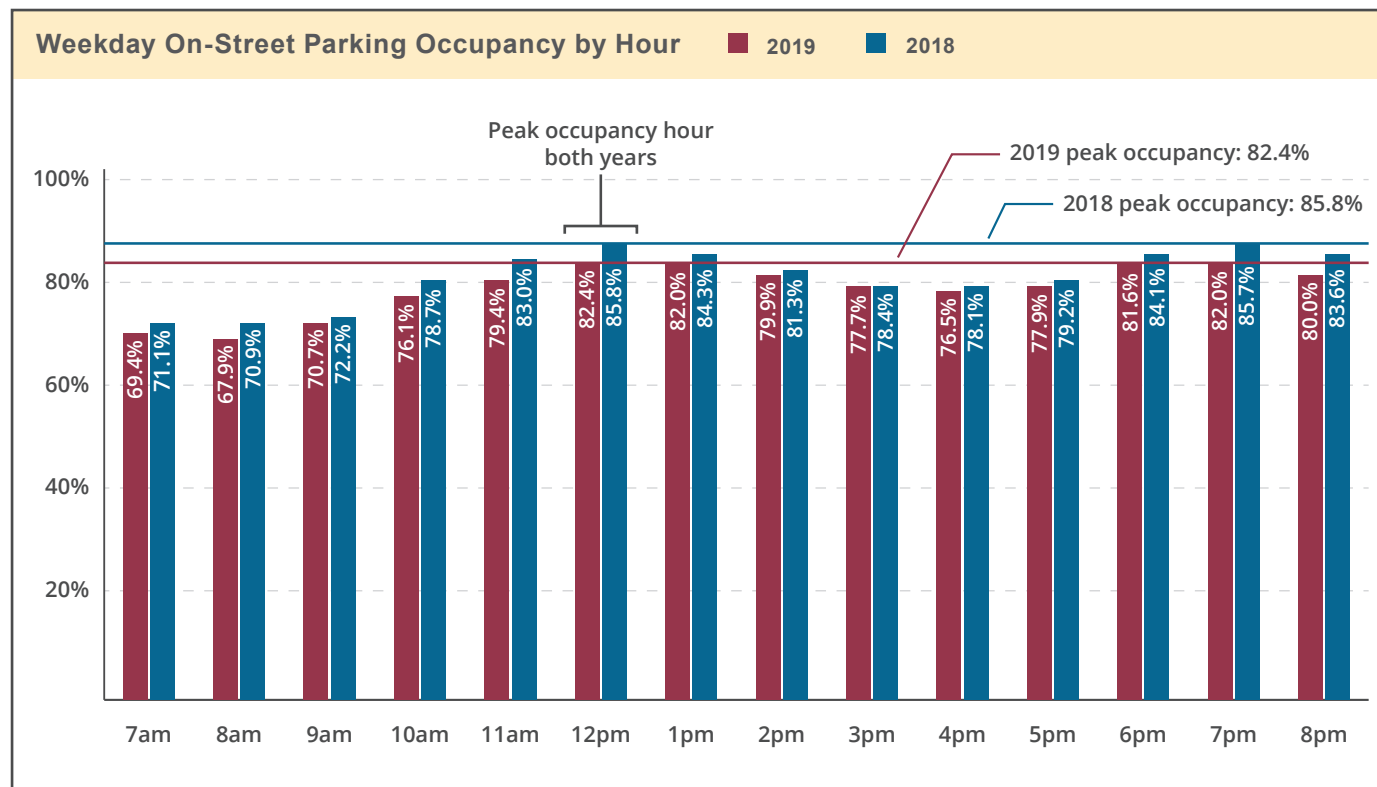


### Inventory Findings:

- There are **3,644 stalls** within the data collection area (5 more stalls than 2018).
- Of the metered stalls, **1,993 stalls are metered/Or By Permit (OBP) stalls** and **687 are metered only**.
- Of the signed/time-limited stalls, **818 stalls are signed/OBP stalls** and **129 are signed only**.
- **Most parking spaces are 4-Hour spaces:** Approximately **91% (3,296 stalls)** of all parking in the study area is designated as 4 Hour parking.

## Parking Occupancy

The chart below illustrates *how fully occupied* all the on-street parking in the study area was at different times during the study day, and compares 2019 occupancy rates to those from 2018.






### Occupancy Findings:

- **Peak occupancy lowered slightly:** At 12:00 PM, the peak occupancy hour, the overall occupancy for the area reached 82.4%; this was slightly lower than the peak occupancy observed in 2018 (85.8%).
- **Overall occupancy is down throughout the day, but still high:** While 2019 occupancy rates were *lower*, throughout the day, than in 2018, parking availability on most block faces was still highly constrained.

## Parking Utilization

The table below illustrates trends in the use of 4-hour on-street parking in the NW district. The figures below examine data for 4 hour spaces overall, 4 hour metered / or by permit spaces, 4 hour metered spaces, and 4 hour signed spaces.

Utilization of 4 hour metered spaces <span style="color: red;">■</span> 2019 figures in red <span style="color: blue;">■</span> 2018 figures in blue			
	Peak Occupancy	Average Length of Stay (by Non Permit Holders)	Violation Rate
4 Hour Spaces Overall	82.4%	2:20 hours	8.4%
	85.8%	2:13 hours	6.9%
	87.6%	2:17 hours	4.5%
	86.7%	2:06 hours	3.7%
	78.08%	1:40 hours	4.3%
	75.8%	1:39 hours	3.6%
	84.6%	2:57 hours	14.0%
	92.1%	2:36 hours	10.2%

### Utilization Findings:

- While **overall peak occupancy declined** between 2018 and 2019, the **average length of stay increased**.
- **Rates of parking violations also increased.** The 2019 violation rate of 8.4% is slightly above the industry best practice standard for effective enforcement.
- **Unique vehicle trips are down:** The total number of unique vehicle trips declined from 11,580 in 2018 to 10,701 in 2019, a decrease of 879 unique vehicle trips (7.6%).
- **One hour is probably not long enough:** 1-Hour-Signed stalls have an average length of stay of 1 hour and 42 minutes, indicating that one hour isn't adequate time for the typical user.
- **Plenty of visitors are parking here:** At peak hour, 50.6% of vehicles in 4-Hour-Signed/OBP stalls were non-permit users.
- **Large numbers of permit holders use the 4-Hour Metered/OBP parking stalls:** Only 22.2% of vehicles in 4-Hour-Metered/OBP stalls were non-permit holders. When overall occupancy is over 85%, this could make finding a space especially difficult for visitors.

- **Meters seem to be more effective parking management tools than signs:**
  - **Lower violation rates:** 2-Hour-Signed stalls have an average length of stay that exceeds two hours for non-permit users, the same as in 2018. In contrast, 2-Hour-Metered stalls have an average length of stay of roughly 1.5 hours.
  - **Lower occupancy rates even when demand is high:** 2-Hour-Metered stalls maintain a much lower occupancy rate compared to 2-Hour-Signed stalls (68.6% versus 80.6%) during the peak hour.
  - **Higher turnover:** Currently, turnover in 2-Hour-Metered stalls is 6.76 compared to 4.01 in 2-Hour-Signed stalls; 5.00 is the industry minimum target.

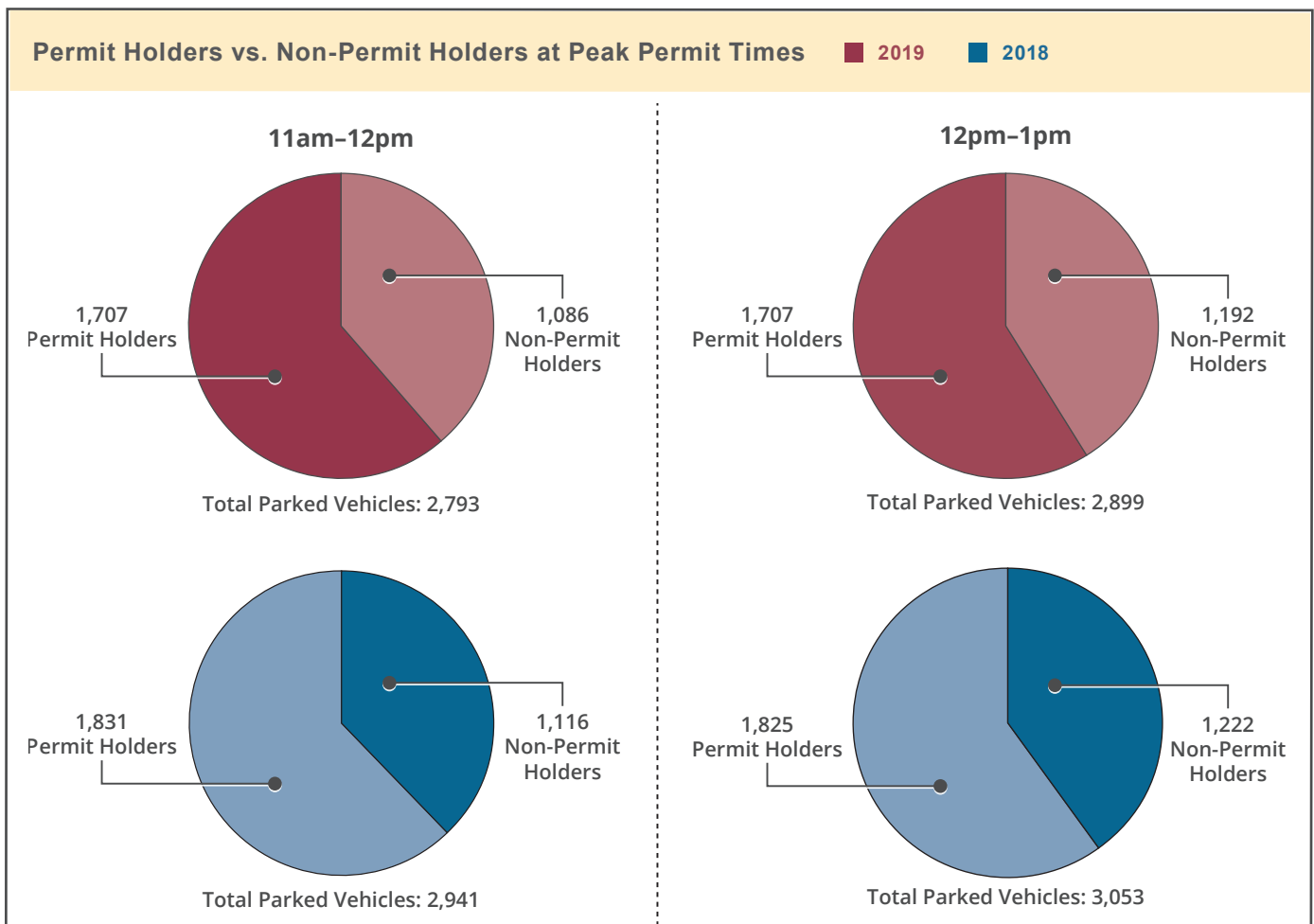
## Area Parking Permit Use

### Ratio of Permit Holders to Non-Permit Holders

The pie graphs below illustrate the ratio of permit holders to non-permit holders that were parked in the study area between 11am and 1pm, when the number of parked permit holders was at its peak. At this time, vehicles with parking permits represented roughly 60% of parked cars in NW.

Permitted vehicles accounted for more than half of occupied parking stalls for 12 out of 14 survey hours.

The number of permits displayed at peak permit time was significantly less than in 2018, however, by a margin of about 124 permits.



## Additional Permit Use Findings

- **The number of allocated permits dropped by 24% between 2018 and 2019:**
  - **Business permit** allocation went down 28% over the previous year.
  - **Residential permits** allocation went down 20% over the previous year.
- **Permit use is still higher than is desired:** Based on current peak hour occupancies, 268 additional permits would need to be removed from current allocations in order to bring occupancies in OBP stalls to 84%.

## Key Recommendations for NW District Parking Management

---

### Reformat Existing Stalls

Our first recommendation is that the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) and the City complete the stall reformatting initiative they have already begun.

This effort includes:

- The elimination of all 1-hour stalls;
- The expansion of meter use, converting signed stalls to metered stalls.

### Reduce Allocation of Permits

Our second recommendation is that PBOT and the City continue to reduce permit allocation. We suggest that the cap be reduced to 4,600 permits (both business and residential) per year.

### Revise Enforcement Hours

Our third recommendation is to change enforcement hours so that they more closely address high occupancy periods. Instead of enforcing parking between 9am and 7pm, we advocate for enforcing parking between 10am and 8pm.

### Get Tough on Meter Use

Our fourth recommendation is to eliminate the option of 'plugging the meter' to encourage more regular turnover in metered stalls.